

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-8 (canceled)

9. (currently amended): A memory device comprising:
~~a gate stack pair with a space between them defining a contact opening;~~
~~a vertical oxide spacer adjacent to each gate stack of said gate stack pair; and~~
~~a respective continuous nitride layer overlaying each said vertical oxide spacer and~~
~~each said gate stack, neither of said continuous nitride layers extending to cover said~~
~~contact opening between said gate stack pair.~~
10. (original): The memory device of claim 9, wherein said gate stack comprises a floating gate and a control gate.
11. (original): The memory device of claim 9, wherein said vertical oxide spacer is between about 50Å and about 300Å in thickness.
12. (original): The memory device of claim 9, wherein said vertical oxide spacer is about 100Å and about 200Å in thickness.
13. (original): The memory device of claim 9, wherein said nitride layer has a thickness equal to about one half the width of said vertical oxide spacer.

14 - 61. (canceled)